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Businesses needed to help stock Fairfield Food Pantry

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FAIRFIELD — A group of young professionals is working to secure help for families and individuals wondering if and when their next meal will arrive.

The Fairfield Chamber Young Business Professionals (YPs) group is sponsoring a food drive for the Fairfield Food Pantry from Oct. 24 through Nov. 14, according to Kert Radel, president of the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce.

The chamber is asking businesses to call 513-881-5500 or email president@fairfieldchamber.com to have their place of business as a dropping off point to collect canned foods, he said.

"We provide the boxes and a flyer showing what canned foods are asked to be donated," Radel said.

Judy Dirksen, a Fairfield Food Pantry trustee, said the need for more donations definitely exists.

"As fast as it comes in, it goes out, and our numbers have increased amazingly," Dirksen said.

The pantry is now serving 146 people more than last year at this time, she said.

"Our numbers are at 800 a month when it used to be an average of 200 or 250 or something like that," Dirksen said. "We're always trying to find ways of fundraising, of bringing more food in, bringing more donations in to help us purchase more food, more goods to help our community."

Among those struggling to put food on the table are single-parent families, seniors on disability and those who have recently lost a job, she said.

"We get a number of that type of people who need our help and we're just so grateful that we can keep our doors open," Dirksen said. "Whatever comes in goes right back out to the community and those in need."

Bill Woeste, Fairfield City Council councilman and chairman for the city's Development Services Committee, said chamber officials approached him to say the Fairfield Chamber Young Business Professionals had chosen the food pantry as its community action project.

"We're very happy about it," Woeste said. "They're real community-active folks who want to show that young people today think as much of those types of groups like the food pantry as maybe their parents often did. They've very proactive and they want to stand up for these kinds of things and contribute."

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